

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY NOTICE

ASBESTOS CONTAINING MATERIALS IN BUILDINGS

The purpose of this notice is to inform employees that there are building materials in buildings at the Berkeley Lab that contain asbestos as well as in some research equipment and supplies. Generally buildings constructed prior to 1981 are more likely to contain asbestos materials, but newer buildings may also contain asbestos. Examples of building materials at the Lab that may contain asbestos include, but are not limited to: floor tile and floor tile mastic, pipe insulation, baseboard and baseboard mastic, acoustical wall tile glue (not the tile itself), acoustical ceiling spray (cottage cheese type appearing material), acoustical ceiling material in B50A, Room 1156 computer room, window putty, roofing material, exterior and interior transite siding (e.g., Siding of B64), exterior building paint (e.g., paint on exterior of Bldg.s 70 & 70A, exterior caulking material, troweled on plaster, air ducting insulation or the tape along the edges of ducting insulation, woven or braided type of wire insulation, joint compound in sheetrock, sheetrock itself in some areas of B70, fire doors, etc. Insulating materials associated with older research equipment and supplies may also contain asbestos such as heat insulating gloves, heat pads, heating tape, transite bench tops, etc.

For a complete listing of areas that have been sampled or consultation on the condition of equipment or supplies that are suspected to contain asbestos, contact the EH&S Asbestos Program Manager at x4028. The hard copy files of sampling results are kept in B26.

Asbestos containing materials pose no health risk to employees unless the materials are disturbed in such a manner that the disturbance releases asbestos fibers and the fibers are inhaled and deposited within the lungs. Examples of methods that may disturb and release fibers includes: breaking, grinding, sanding, scraping, drilling, cutting, etc., or any other method that creates an airborne release. Health effects are generally associated with an increased incidence of exposure and may include asbestosis, lung cancer and mesothelioma, a rare cancer of the lung or stomach cavity lining.

EH&S staff conduct ongoing periodic surveys of existing asbestos containing building materials to ensure the material is intact and in good condition. Additionally, EH&S reviews all asbestos work performed onsite and provides oversight during abatement activities according to regulatory requirements.

If you have any questions or comments related to asbestos in your work area, health effects, or active asbestos abatement activities adjacent to your work area, or to report suspected asbestos material that is damaged, please contact the EH&S Asbestos Program Manager at x4028.